

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Land Acknowledgement

We gather, acknowledging the land we are on, the rocks and waters of this land, the plants and animals of this land, the air we share.

We also acknowledge the original people of this land, including the Nipmuc, Pawtucket, and Massa-adchu-es-et People(s), as well as the legacy of the Natick Praying Indians, and all those who have walked on this land before us, as well as our own ancestors.

We remember ourselves as part of a web extending back in time, forward in time, and in every direction in time.



Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

September 28, 2025

The most common way people give up their power
is by thinking they don't have any.

- Alice Walker

PRELUDE

Holy, Holy, Holy

arr.by J.B. Taylor

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Kerri Westberg

One: Come on in, gather 'round.

All: Hear the story of God's love.

One: Especially when you need it most.

All: Hear the story of God's love.

One: Lean in close and breathe in deep.

All: Hear the story of God's love. Amen.

* OPENING HYMN #497 *When Israel Was In Egypt's Land* Go Down Moses

When Israel was in Egypt's land, let my people go,
oppressed so hard they could not stand, let my people go.

Refrain:

Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land,
tell old Pharaoh, to let my people go.

Thus saith the Lord, bold Moses said, let my people go,
If not I'll smite your first born dead, let my people go. [*Refrain*]

The Lord told Moses what to do, let my people go,
To lead the Hebrew children through, let my people go. [*Refrain*]

Then Miriam dances and sang her song, let my people go,
"Our God has triumphed over wrong!" let my people go. [*Refrain*]

Oh, let us all from bondage flee, let my people go,
and let us all in Christ be free, let my people go. [*Refrain*]

CENTERING PRAYER AND THE PRAYER OF JESUS

Creator God, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

*** SHARING GOD’S PEACE**

*In person we rise to greet each other with a wave, bow or a high five.
And we send God’s peace to those watching from home!*

One: God’s peace be with you.

All: And also with you!

*** SONG OF CELEBRATION**

Sing a New World Into Being

Sing a new world into being, sound a bold and hopeful theme.
Find a tune for silent yearnings, lend your voice and dare to dream:
Dream a church where all who worship find their lives and loves belong.
Sing a new world into being, sing as Christ inspires your song!

CHOIR ANTHEM

Together

words & music by Ken Desso

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 5:1-9

COMING OF AGE CELEBRATION SERVICE

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

Sebastian Oliver Gill-Alvarez

April Elizabeth Mulloy

PROMISE OF THE PARENTS

We recognize you are no longer a child.
You are coming of age.
As you begin to carve out the life that will be your own,
we will stand behind you and support you.
You are holy and wonderful and blessed,
and we won’t look away from you.
We are your parents, and we support you on this journey.

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER FOR THE PARENTS (TOGETHER)

God of patience and love,
strengthen and uphold these parents as they support their youth.
Remind them they can't walk the journey for their teen,
and they can't shield them from pain.
Be with these parents
as their roles and relationships with their children shift.
May parents and teens see your image in each other,
and know you are with them all the while. Amen.

PROMISE OF THE CONGREGATION TO THE TEENS

We will stand behind you on your journey.
You are unique expressions of the creative power of God.
God is calling you.
Explore, ask, claim, and embrace.
You are holy and wonderful and blessed,
and we won't look away from you.
We are your church family and we support you on this journey.

PROMISE OF THE YOUTH OF THE CONGREGATION

We will, with God's help.
We offer you our friendship.
You are holy and wonderful and blessed,
and we won't look away from you.
We will make the journey together.

BLESSING OF THE TEENS

May the Living God fill you with courage, wisdom and joy.

Amen!

May Jesus the Christ, inspire your living and remind you that you are loved.

Amen!

May the fire of the Holy Spirit burn brightly within you.

Amen!

And may the blessing of God

who made you just as you are,
who declares you beautiful and beloved,
and who walks with you your whole life through
surround you this day and forevermore.

Amen!

MUSICAL RESPONSE

After the Coming of Age Celebration,
children (age 3-Grade 6) depart for Sunday School (Godly Play & Connect).
Parents may accompany children and return to worship once they are settled.

REFLECTION

The Last Straw

Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry

MUSICAL RESPONSE

GATHERING OUR COMMUNITY IN PRAYER

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

ALLELUIA

OFFERING OURSELVES AND OUR SUBSTANCE

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERTORY

As the plates are passed from person to person, we share our financial gifts.
Even if we are not adding money to the place, we offer thoughts of gratitude.

As you hold the plate, you might breathe deeply and pray,

“May all the earth be healthy and whole.”

*** SONG OF PRAISE**

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done.

Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*** SENDING HYMN #517**

O God of Every Nation

Llangloffan

O God of every nation, of every race and land,
redeem the whole creation with your almighty hand.
Where hate and fear divide us and bitter threats are hurled,
in love and mercy guide us, and heal our strife-torn world.

From search for wealth and power and scorn of truth and right,
from trust in bombs that shower destruction through the night,
from pride of race and station and blindness to your way,
deliver every nation, eternal God, we pray!

Keep bright in us the vision of days when war shall cease,
when hatred and division give way to love and peace,
till dawns the morning glorious when truth and justice reign,
and Christ shall rule victorious o'er all the world's domain.

BLESSING

*** FIRE DRILL ***

Please join us for coffee hour in the Vestry following the worship service.

Special thanks to our coffee hour hosts this week, Gail Martin & Carolyn Williams!

TODAY'S COMING OF AGE CELEBRATION SERVICE

Our teenagers are moving into an important time in their lives. They are no longer children. More and more often they will confront choices they must make for themselves. Today we celebrate a rite of passage where we recognize the blessing of God's gift of teenhood.

You, the congregation, are witnesses of this rite of passage. You are here today to actively help in this process by your presence, your prayers and your love.

Remember, when the congregation is called on to reply, "Amen," you are literally saying, "Yes, Lord - let it be so."

Introducing the "Coming of Age" Group

Sebastian Oliver Gill-Alvarez

My name is Sebastian. I am in 8th grade, and I like to play music. I also like to play games with friends when I have time.

April Elizabeth Mulloy

Hi, my name is April Mulloy. I am an 8th Grader at Kennedy Middle School. I am a competitive dancer. I enjoy spending time with family and friends. I love the beach and fall.

UPCOMING EVENTS

More at fccnatick.org/events

THIS SUNDAY

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL MA ASSOCIATION (SNEUCC)
Sun., September 28th @ First Parish of Bolton, 673 Main St., Bolton @ 3-4:30pm
Theme: The Heart of Faith. Register [HERE](#)

THIS WEEK

KNITTING CIRCLE
Mon., September 29th in the Parlor at 7:00pm

PUB THEOLOGY
Wed., October 1st from 7-8:30pm

Topic and location TBD. Informal spiritual conversation. BYOB. Snacks provided. All are welcome. Contact Sarallyn at sarallyn@fccnatick.org to join the email list.

I AM MY NEIGHBOR'S KEEPER: A Benefit Concert (co-sponsored by FCCN)
Sun., October 5th @ Edwards Church, 39 Edwards St., Framingham at 3:00pm
FREE: Donations accepted

Renowned bassist and composer Avery Sharpe will present a concert of original compositions which form the collection, *I Am My Neighbor's Keeper*. These compositions respond to the political and racial divisions in our country, highlighting our commitment to one another and reminding us that as our neighbor's keeper, we should help one another. Mr. Sharpe will offer a narrative to introduce each song, amplifying its significance in our spiritual and day to day lives. Musically, the compositions are laden with Jazz, Gospel, African, Blues and other influences.

Edwards Church is located at 39 Edwards Street in Framingham. The concert will start at 3:00 pm and doors will open at 2:30. Edwards Church is a fully accessible space.

THIS WEEK continued

I AM MY NEIGHBOR'S KEEPER: A Benefit Concert

This concert is free to the public, and donations to support *A Place to Turn* in their work to address hunger in MetroWest Massachusetts will be accepted.

Advance tickets and donations may be made through Eventbrite at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/i-am-my-neighbors-keeper-a-benefit-concert-tickets-1641609049859>

For further information, please contact Open Spirit Center at 508-877-2050 or debbie@openspiritcenter.org

CROSSWALK YOUTH (grades 7-12)

Sun., October 5th @ Corn Maze @ Hanson Farm, Framingham.

Departing: 2:30pm from St. Paul's Episcopal Church | Returning: approx. 5:30pm

WELCOME LUNCH ~ SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, October 5th, after Worship ~ Chat Room #116

"New" folks at FCC Natick are invited to lunch on Sunday, October 5! Especially for folks who have been attending FCCN for a year or less. Rev. Cindy, the Welcome Team, and a few long time FCC members will be hosting. We'll provide the food, the fun, and childcare! Please contact Jeannine Keedy @ jkeedy@rcn.com. **Please RSVP by Monday, September 29th.**

OCTOBER EVENTS

FAMILY PROMISE METROWEST: FCCN HOST WEEK

Our next host week begins October 6th, 2025. Contact Chris Gentry @ jcmsgentry@gmail.com to sign up for the following opportunities! 1) Prepare and deliver a meal for about 5-10 people (1-2 volunteers needed for Tues & Thurs). 2) Purchase and deliver groceries from a shopping list provided by FPM. (1-3 volunteers needed) Sign up directly using the link: <https://cerv.is/0002x1112>

*Also, gift cards are always welcome.

OCTOBER EVENTS

OWL SESSIONS 2025-26

Tuesday, October 7th from 7-9pm

FCC is planning OWL sessions. Parent orientation meeting. ALL 7th-8th graders welcome. Contact Sarallyn @ sarallyn@fccn.org with questions.

BURLINGTON ICE STANDOUT

October 8th (2nd Wed. each mo.) ~ 10:30am carpool @ FCCN

There is an organized and peaceful standout from 11am-1pm to anyone interested. For more information, or to save a spot, contact Rev. Cindy at revcindyfccn@gmail.com

DONATE TO FCCN's TRUNK OR TREAT

Saturday, October 25th in the church parking lot

Join us for FCCN's Trunk or Treat event during Natick's Spooktacular. Collection items thru 10/20: candy, gluten-free snacks, and novelty toys. Contact Robin Clausen @ rclausen@gmail.com to learn more info.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

EYES ON OWLS ~ SAVE THE DATE!

Date: Saturday, November 15th from 1-2pm @ FCCN's Sanctuary

Tickets \$7.00 from [EventBrite](#), advance ticket sales only, fees apply

Marcia and Mark Wilson highlight the owls' unique adaptations, habitats and behaviors in the wild, while sharing tips on how you can look for owls yourself. Questions are welcomed. Recommended for ages 6+.

EVERY WEEK AT FCCN:

Sundays at 9:00am - Adult Faith Group

Wednesdays at Noon - Mid-Week Connection [Zoom](https://ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek) (ucc.fccnatick.org/midweek)

Wednesdays at 7pm - Centering Prayer Circle [Zoom](https://ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle) (ucc.fccnatick.org/prayercircle)

Thursdays at 7pm - Choir Rehearsal

PRAYER LIST

Sharing Your Prayer Requests. Prayer concerns and celebrations to be shared during worship can be done so verbally (raise your hand to be recognized) or in writing (use provided notecards) or emailed to prayers@fccnatick.org.

Eric Carricker	Charles	Friends & Family of Kenny Hoffman
Chris Stefanatos	Lois and Pam Dotter	Pete and his family
Susan & Bob	Char Hannon	Family and Friends of Ronnie Eastman
Angela	Shirley Lilly	John Hickey
Joel	Uncle Al & Aunt Deb	Marty
Debbie Collins	Paul S.	Family and Friends of Charles Gobron
Jeanna B.	Don & Heather C.	Dale
Aunt Kathy	Mary Cerreto	Joe Barnes
Eric	Connie Sullivan	Steve & Deb Evers
Sarah Kazim	Phil Jennings	Amy Hollister
Joan Person	Faye Bishop	Virginia Fenton
Brian J.	Tommy Hannon	The Family and Friends of Janet Collins
Beverly Newell	Paul	Tammy, daughter Ashley & Veronica
Anna Hayes	Anne	Declan and his parents Beth & Kenny
John Sullivan	Molly	Myriam's brother Alex
Jane Hall	Evelyn and Family	Mary Anderson
Jenna Hayes	Mike McCormick	Peg & Charlie Ostrander
Abby Robbins	Malfrid Abrahamsen	Frankie Notarbartolo
Natalie Friend	Bob Brown	Melissa & Tiffany Wallace
Jayne Hayes	Doug Shirley	Ann & George Schmidt
Myriam's Mom	Diane	Audra, Nate & Rowan Mackey
Robbins Family	Madhu Gupta	Pat & Jane Conaway
Jackie Snizek	Tanya	Peace for the world and in everyone's day
Dorothy Young	Fay	All immigrant families seeking justice
Jennie Lynch	Lyla	The people of Ukraine & Russia
Katie	Janet Peterson	The people of Santa Maria Tzeja
		Angels of Hope in Uganda
		Overdose victims

The prayer list is updated periodically. If you find a name has been rotated off the list for whom you would like continuing prayers, please contact Prayer List Coordinator Linda Champion at lchampion17@gmail.com or the office at 508-653-0971. Also, if a known issue has been resolved, please let us know. Thank you to all for your care and prayers.

WELCOME TO WORSHIP AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NATICK!

Get Connected

If you are joining us for the first time, we encourage you to check out the Welcome brochure (available in the pew or from an usher) for lots of information about life at FCC Natick.

Please also consider filling out one of the **Welcome cards** in the pew, and introducing yourself to our pastor, Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry. You can also reach her by email, revcindyfccn@gmail.com.

Our website is a great place to learn about programs, activities, and events – check us out at www.fccnatick.org. The website is also where you can sign up for the Link, our weekly email newsletter.

Open and Affirming.

FCCN is an Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation, affirming the dignity and worth of every person. We welcome everyone into full participation including people of every ability, race, culture, gender, economic circumstance, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation.

Children and Youth

Children and youth are always welcome in worship. The Playground down front has a great view and quiet activities. Midway through worship, children ages 3 through grade six are invited to join in for Sunday School: preschoolers through kids in grade 3 explore sacred story through the Godly Play curriculum, and youth in grades 4 through 6 participate in our Connect program. Staffed nursery care is also available near the sanctuary throughout the service. For more information, check out our Welcome brochure or website.

Sharing Your Prayer Requests

Prayer concerns and celebrations to be shared during worship can be done so verbally (raise your hand to be recognized) or emailed to prayers@fccnatick.org.

Accessibility

The **ListenWiFi** app provides hearing assistance. Download the app to your smartphone and use your own headphones. Large print bulletins are available from the ushers, as are noise-cancelling headphones.

Photography/Videography Policy

Sunday worship is livestreamed via local cable access. In addition, we occasionally take **video or photography** during worship and elsewhere on the church property. By your presence, you grant First Congregational Church of Natick unrestricted rights to use and publish, transmit, or telecast images that may be taken of you for use in communication related to the church. Please contact the church office (508-653-0971 or admin@fccnatick.org) if you have any questions or concerns.